Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): An information processing apparatus for managing a virtual space, the information apparatus comprising:

a processor;

a memory device storing instructions, which when executed by the processor, cause the processor to:

(a)   maintain ~~a user space within~~ the virtual space, wherein the virtual space includes:

       (i)   ~~the user space comprises spatial locations~~a user space that virtually represents ~~an~~ areas owned and occupied by a first user, wherein the first user controls admission of other users to the user space for chat sessions with the first user; and

       (ii)   ~~said~~a plurality of spatial locations ~~are~~ rendered as three dimensional images, said plurality of spatial locations including:~~;~~

       ~~(iii)~~   ~~said spatial locations including:~~

          (A)   a first spatial location rendered as a first three dimensional image; and

          (B)   a second spatial location rendered as a second three dimensional image; ~~and~~

       ~~(iv)~~   ~~the first user controls admission of other users within the user space for chat sessions with the first user;~~

(b)   store:

       (i)   the user space;

       (ii)   the plurality of spatial locations;

(iii)   a list of spatial locations corresponding to the first user, wherein the list of spatial locations lists spatial locations recorded by the first user including the second spatial location; and

(iiiiv)   at least one list of other users associated with a chat session within the user space, wherein said list of other users:

  (A)   is generated by the first user; and

  (B)   includes:

      (x)   at least one second-other user denied admission to the user space; and

      (y)   at least one third-other user granted admission to the user space:, where the list of spatial locations is designated by the first user;

(c)   place the list of spatial locations at a position in said first spatial location rendered as said first three dimensional image, wherein:

  (i)   the position in said first three dimensional spatial location is designated by the first user; and

  (ii)   in response to said-at least one third-second user selecting said second spatial location from said list of spatial locations which is placed at said position by said first user, a graphical representation of said at least one third-second user is moved from said first spatial location to said second special-spatial location;

(d)   notify the first user when one of said othera requesting users makes a request for admission to the user space occupied by the first user;

(e)   determine:

  (i)   based on the request for admission, whether the second-requesting user is denied admission to the user space or granted admission to the user space based on the list of users; and

  (ii)   based on a time associated with the request for admission, whether the second-requesting user is denied admission to the user space based on a passing of a predetermined period of time; and

(f)   control admission of the requesting user to the user space based on a response from the first user.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The information processing apparatus of Claim 1, wherein when executed by the processor, the plurality of instructions cause the processor to provide at least one of a visual and audible notification to the first user.

Claims 3-4 (canceled).

Claim 5 (currently amended): The information processing apparatus of Claim 1, wherein when executed by the processor, the plurality of instructions cause the processor to:

(a)   store first entry information generated by the first user to allow other users to enter the user space;

(b)   distribute the first entry information to the ~~second~~ requesting user in response to an instruction from the first user; and

(c)   determine whether entry information used by the ~~second~~ requesting user to gain access to the user space matches the first entry information when the ~~second~~ requesting user uses the distributed first entry information to make a request for admission to the user space; and

(d)   when the determining means determines that the entry information used by the ~~second~~ requesting user matches the first entry information:

(i)   terminate the notification; and

(ii)   permit the ~~second~~ requesting user admission to the user space.

Claim 6 (canceled).

Claim 7 (currently amended): An information processing method for managing a virtual space, the information processing method comprising:

maintaining ~~a user space within~~ the virtual space, wherein the virtual space includes:

(a)   ~~the user space comprises spatial locations~~ a user space that virtually represents ~~an~~ areas owned and occupied by a first user, wherein the first user controls admission of other users to the user space for chat sessions with the first user;

(b)   ~~said~~ a plurality of spatial locations ~~are~~ rendered as three dimensional images, said plurality of spatial locations including:

(i)   a first spatial location rendered as a first three dimensional image; and

(ii)   a second spatial location rendered as a second three dimensional image;

~~(c)   said spatial locations includes a first spatial location rendered as a first three dimensional image; and~~

~~(d)   the first user controls admission of other users within the user space for chat sessions with the first user;~~

storing:

(a)   the user space;

(b)   the plurality of spatial locations;

(bc)   a list of spatial locations corresponding to the first user, wherein the list of spatial locations lists spatial locations recorded by the first user including the second spatial location; and

(ed)   at least one list of users associated with a chat session within the user space, wherein said list of users:

(i)   is generated by the first user; and

(ii)   includes:

(A)   at least one other user denied admission to the user space; and

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(B)   at least one other user granted admission to the user space ~~wherein the list of spatial locations is designated by the first user;~~

placing the list of spatial locations at a position in said first spatial location rendered as said first three dimensional image, wherein:

(a)   the position in said first three dimensional spatial location is designated by the first user; and

(b)   in response to ~~said~~ at least one ~~third~~ second user selecting said second spatial location from said list of spatial locations which is placed at said position by said first user, a graphical representation of said at least one ~~third~~ second user is moved from said first spatial location to said second special location;

notifying the first user when a ~~second~~ requesting user makes a request for admission to the user space occupied by the first user;

determining, based on the request for admission, whether the ~~second~~ requesting user is denied admission to the user space or granted admission to the user space based on the list of users;

determining, based on a time associated with the request for admission, whether the ~~second~~ requesting user is denied admission to the user space based on a passing of a predetermined period of time; and

controlling admission of the ~~second~~ requesting user to the user space based on a response from the first user, the response being based on the determination made by said determining steps.

Claim 8 (currently amended): A storage medium having stored therein a computer-readable program for causing a computer system to perform processing which enables a plurality of users to communicate with one another in a shared virtual space formed and provided on a computer network, the program comprising the steps of:

maintaining ~~a user space within~~ the virtual space, wherein the virtual space includes:

(a) ~~the user space comprises spatial locations~~<u>a user space</u> that virtually represent areas owned and occupied by a first user<u>, wherein the first user controls admission of other users to the user space for chat sessions with the first user</u>;

(b) ~~said~~ <u>a</u> plurality of spatial locations ~~are~~ rendered as three dimensional images<u>, said plurality of spatial locations including:</u>;

~~(c)   said spatial locations including:~~

    (i)   a first spatial location rendered as a first three dimensional image; and

    (ii)   a second spatial location rendered as a second three dimensional image; and

~~(d)   the first user controls admission of other users within the user space for chat sessions with the first user;~~

storing:

    (a)   the user space;

    <u>(b)   the plurality of spatial locations;</u>

    (~~b~~<u>c</u>)   a list of spatial locations <u>corresponding to the first user, wherein the list of spatial locations lists spatial locations recorded by the first user including the second spatial location</u>; and

    (~~e~~<u>d</u>)   at least one list of users associated with a chat session within the user space, wherein said list of users:

        (i)   is generated by the first user; and

        (ii)   includes:

            (A)   at least one other user denied admission to the user space; and

            (B)   at least one other user granted admission to the user space ~~wherein the list of spatial locations is designated by the first user~~;

placing the list of spatial locations at a position in said first spatial location rendered as said first three dimensional image, wherein:

(a) the position in said first three dimensional spatial location is designated by the first user; and

(b) in response to ~~said~~ at least one ~~third~~ second user selecting said second spatial location from said list of spatial locations which is placed at said position by said first user, a graphical representation of said at least one ~~third~~ second user is moved from said first spatial location to said second special location;

notifying the first user when a ~~second~~ requesting user makes a request for admission to the user space occupied by the first user;

determining, based on the request for admission, whether the ~~second~~ requesting user is denied admission to the user space or granted admission to the user space based on the list of users;

determining, based on a time associated with the request for admission, whether the ~~second~~ requesting user is denied admission to the user space based on a passing of a predetermined period of time; and

controlling admission of the ~~second~~ requesting user to the user space based on the determination made in the determining steps.

Claim 9 (currently amended): A program for causing a computer to perform the steps of:

maintaining ~~a user space within the~~ a virtual space, wherein the virtual space includes:

(a) ~~the user space comprises spatial locations~~ a user space that virtually represents an ~~areas~~ owned and occupied by a first user, wherein the first user controls admission of other users to the user space for chat sessions with the first user;

(b) ~~said~~ a plurality of spatial locations ~~are~~ rendered as three dimensional images, said plurality of spatial locations including;

~~(c) said spatial locations including:~~

(i) a first spatial location rendered as a first three dimensional image; and

        (ii)   a second spatial location rendered as a second three dimensional image; and

     (d)   ~~the first user controls admission of other users within the user space for chat sessions with the first user;~~

storing:

     (a)   the user space;

     (b)   <u>the plurality of spatial locations;</u>

     (~~b~~<u>c</u>)   a list of spatial locations <u>corresponding to the first user, wherein the list of spatial locations lists spatial locations recorded by the first user including the second spatial location</u>; and

     (~~e~~<u>d</u>)   at least one list of users associated with a chat session within the user space, wherein said list of users:

          (i)   is generated by the first user; and

          (ii)   includes:

               (A)   at least one other user denied admission to the user space; and

               (B)   at least one other user granted admission to the user space ~~wherein the list of spatial locations is designated by the first user;~~

placing the list of spatial locations at a position in said first spatial location rendered as said first three dimensional image, wherein;

     (a)   the position in said first three dimensional spatial location is designated by the first user; and

     (b)   in response to ~~said~~ at least one ~~third~~ <u>second</u> user selecting said second spatial location from said list of spatial locations which is placed at said position by said first user, a graphical representation of said at least one ~~third~~ <u>second</u> user is moved from said first spatial location to said second special location;

notifying a first user when a ~~second~~ <u>requesting</u> user makes a request for admission to a ~~virtual~~<u>the user</u> space occupied by the first user;

determining, based on the request for admission, whether the ~~second~~ requesting user is denied admission to the user space or granted admission to the user space based on the list of users stored in said storage means;

determining, based on a time associated with the request for admission, whether the ~~second~~ requesting user is denied admission to the user space based on a passing of a predetermined period of time; and

controlling admission of the ~~second~~ requesting user to the virtual space based on the determination made in the determining steps.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The program of Claim 9, the program causing the computer to perform the further steps of:

storing a list of users designated by the first user as those denied admission to the virtual space;

determining whether the ~~second~~ requesting user is on the list when the ~~second~~ requesting user makes the request for admission to the virtual space; and

terminating the notification and denying the ~~second~~ requesting user admission to the virtual space when it is determined that the ~~second~~ requesting user is on the list.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The program of Claim 9, the program causing the computer to perform the further steps of:

storing a list of users designated by the first user as those permitted admission to the virtual space;

determining whether the ~~second~~ requesting user is on the list when the ~~second~~ requesting user makes the request for admission to the virtual space; and

terminating the notification and permitting the ~~second~~ requesting user admission to the virtual space when it is determined that the ~~second~~ requesting user is on the list.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The program of Claim 9, the program causing the computer to perform the further steps of:

storing first entry information generated by the first user to allow other users to enter the virtual space;

distributing the stored first entry information to the ~~second~~ requesting user in response to an instruction from the first user;

determining whether entry information used by the ~~second~~ requesting user to gain access to the virtual space matches the stored first entry information when the ~~second~~ requesting user uses the distributed first entry information to make a request for admission to the virtual space; and

terminating the notification and permitting the ~~second~~ requesting user admission to the virtual space when it is determined in the determining step that the entry information used by the ~~second~~ requesting user matches the stored first entry information.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The program of Claim 9, the program causing the computer to perform the further steps of:

storing a list of predetermined spatial locations in the virtual space, the spatial locations being designated by the first user; and

placing the stored list in predetermined space in the virtual space in response to an instruction from the first user.

Claim 14 (previously presented): The information processing apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the list of spatial locations includes at least one spatial location that virtually represents an area owned by a user other than the first user.

Claim 15 (previously presented): The information processing method of Claim 7, wherein the list of spatial locations includes at least one spatial location that virtually represents an area owned by a user other than the first user.

Claim 16 (previously presented): The storage medium of Claim 8, wherein the list of spatial locations includes at least one spatial location that virtually represents an area owned by a user other than the first user.

Claim 17 (previously presented): The program of Claim 9, wherein the list of spatial locations includes at least one spatial location that virtually represents an area owned by a user other than the first user.